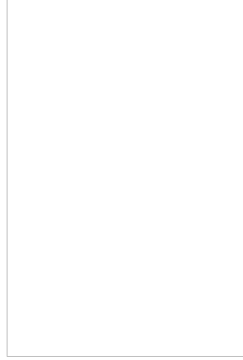


Wisdom Develops Samadhi

by Acariya Maha Boowa Ñanasampanno

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Translator's Introduction

This book 'Wisdom Develops Samadhi' is one of the few books written by Acariya Maha Boowa (Bhikkhu Nanasampanno) who is now the abbot of Baan Taad Forest Monastery, which is situated in the country-side close to the village where he was born and brought up. When he was old enough he ordained as a monk and some while afterwards he went away to find a meditation teacher. He was directed towards the Venerable Acariya Mun (Bhuridatta Thera) and Acariya Maha Boowa has said that as soon he met Acariya Mun, he knew that Acariya Mun was his teacher. He learnt and practised under the guidance of Acariya Mun for nine years until Acariya Mun died at the age of eighty years, after which Acariya Maha Boowa practised the way on his own in the hills and forests of Thailand. He then wandered throughout the country, going to nearly every province until he was offered land by supporters near his home village to build a forest monastery. Since then, he settled down and has lived there since.

Many words in 'Wisdom Develops Samadhi' have been left in Pali because there is often no adequate translation in English; it is hoped the reader will forgive any difficulties that this may make, but it is felt better that the reader should not-understand rather than mis-understand. However, a fairly comprehensive glossary has been included at the back, which should cover all the Pali words that are not actually explained in the text.

It is hoped that this book will bring the Dhamma to many people and that it will help people to realise that the living Dhamma is still extant and is not just a thing of the distant past or of the distant future when the next Buddha comes. May all who read this book gain from it that which will aid them towards the supreme happiness of Nibbana.

1. Sila

SILA – is that which sets a limit to the “outgoing exuberance”¹ in a person’s actions of body and speech and the responsibility for these actions and their results rests with the heart.

Good people do not like to associate with someone whose “outgoing exuberance” is not restrained by sila, and nobody trusts him. In business and other affairs, even if there are only one or two people who have bad sila and no sense of shame in their behaviour, it is certain that the social group in which they live and work cannot remain secure for long. It is bound to be destroyed or set in disorder by them in whatever way they can, as soon as they have a chance when others are off their guard. It is like living with a fierce poisonous snake which is just waiting to bite whenever one is unprotected.

Thus sila is the Dhamma which protects the world, keeping it cool and happy so that there shall be no cause for doubt, suspicion and mistrust which can arise from a mutual lack of confidence in those things which are liable to cause friction and trouble. These things often start in a small way and develop into larger things, things which everyone wants to avoid.

Sila is of many kinds, but here we will only consider the five sila, the eight, ten, and 227 sila, which different kinds of people should variously maintain as it suits their status, age, and physical capabilities.

The five sila are the most important for lay people who have dealings with society in its various aspects. They should maintain these sila as that which gives a recommendation of their individual personal integrity and of their mutual integrity, thus keeping them from falling apart when they gain and lose from each other in business or society everywhere.

It is noticeable how, if there are one or two people working in business, in a company or in government service, who always maintain the five sila, they are just the people who are most liked, praised and trusted in all kinds of affairs by their business associates, such as those affairs which are connected with money. Whether such people remain in that work or go elsewhere, they will be well liked and respected everywhere, because when they maintain sila, it means that they also have Dhamma within their hearts – like the taste of food which cannot be separated from its nature. And conversely, when such people have Dhamma within them, they also have sila, so that whenever they break any part of their sila, it means that at that time they do not have Dhamma within them, because Dhamma is associated with the heart and sila is associated with bodily actions and speech. Therefore the good and bad actions of the body and speech indicate and show the state of the heart – which is the leader and the one that is responsible.

If the heart always has Dhamma within it, the ways of the body and speech are bound to be clean and free from blame in all their activities. Therefore, people who perform clean actions of body and speech proclaim by these actions that they are the kind of people who have Dhamma in their hearts, and moral behaviour in their actions, speech and hearts. This attracts the hearts of other people everywhere so that they turn to such people – and so it is that they are always popular and well thought of in all ages.

Even those who are unable to promote their actions, speech, and hearts in the foregoing way still have respect and reverence for those who have moral behaviour in their actions, speech, and hearts, in the same way as all of us have respect and reverence for the Lord Buddha and his true followers (savaka). This indicates that moral behaviour, meaning that which is good and graceful, is always desirable and valuable in the world, and is never out of date.

Sometimes however, it happens that the nature of moral behaviour is altered from its true or “inherent nature” into doctrines and traditions which come from a people’s national, class, or cultural background. This is the reason why moral behaviour becomes a thing of nation, class or cult, in accordance with these popular doctrines; and this is why different peoples throughout the world are constantly criticizing and blaming each other. But apart from this, moral behaviour is the way of merit which can always lead this age towards progress and development for as long as people in this world are still interested in adjusting their own actions of body, speech, and heart to accord with the ways of moral behaviour.

Whenever the world has been disturbed and troubled, it is obvious that it is because people have been lacking in moral behaviour and nowadays, if people do not hasten to improve themselves in accordance with the true nature of moral behaviour, the powers of the world will soon erupt in their full fury, and even those who wield the power will not survive and all will be destroyed.

But in particular in each family circle, if sila, which is the basis of proper behaviour is lacking both husband and his wife will lack confidence in each other. Before long there will arise doubt and suspicions that each is associating with other women and men and having clandestine love affairs, which will undermine the unity and prosperity of their family. If moral behaviour is lacking to this extent, the dissatisfaction in their hearts will begin to come to fruition and they will be full of trouble and worry. Even work, which is the basis of steady family life, will be disrupted, and the children will all be involved in the prevailing air of dissension. But those who continue to act in immoral ways that are progressively worse than the foregoing, are sure to find that sooner or later, all those things which were firmly established suddenly start to flare up into dissension and trouble. Like a pot full of water which is hit and breaks and all the water pours out and disperses at once.

So if the world wants prosperity and civilisation, it is still necessary that it should conform to the standards of moral behaviour – and how can anyone truly speaking, object to the principle of truth which is moral behaviour, which has been in the world since time immemorial?

Natural moral behaviour does not have to be asked for as precepts from a bhikkhu (monk) or from someone in an official capacity in a Wat (monastery) or elsewhere before it is established. For if a person respects and likes those characteristics within himself which are right, good and graceful, and if he behaves in this way personally as well as in association with others, avoiding actions which are contrary to such good behaviour, it indicates that he has moral behaviour within his character.

The reasons why morality arises in the heart and in behaviour of a person are: Firstly – that it arises from a person's "inherent nature", as already mentioned above.

Secondly – that it comes from association with wise people, such as recluses and teachers – and that after learning from them one puts their teaching on moral behaviour into practice.

These two things are sufficient to arouse the practise of moral behaviour in oneself, and to enable one to become a person in whom it is constantly present. These two will also be sufficient to preserve one's own status and that of one's family in all forms of society with which they have dealings, and it will maintain a freedom from suspicion and doubt both within one's family circle and amongst friends.

Lay people may practise only the five sila, and while their activities are within the bounds of moral behaviour, it will enable them and their families to be at ease with a clear heart.

As for the eight, ten, and 227 sila, they are based upon the five sila and are progressively more refined for those people who wish to practise the higher levels of moral behaviour. But both in the practices of maintaining sila and in paying attention to what one is doing, the rules or the method differ progressively from those of the five sila as one goes higher.

Summarizing briefly, sila of every grade is for the purpose of controlling "outgoing exuberance" in the behaviour of body and speech. For one who practises it correctly, it is also for the purpose of living in a "peaceful" way with a happy and easy heart. And if one associates with other people, who themselves maintain sila, it is essential that one should oneself be a good person. But those who have low or vulgar minds are not likely to understand the necessity for sila, because they do not want to become good people, nor to get involved in the world of good people, and they always try to break up the happiness of others and to instigate trouble and anger in the world whenever they get a chance to do so.

One should not think that moral behaviour is exclusively a human faculty, for even animals can have some aspects of it. One needs only to observe the animals which people look after in their homes to see how in some degree the hearts and the behaviour of animals are permeated with the nature of Dhamma.

One who always has moral behaviour as the basis of his character, besides being good natured, having the confidence and being popular with the people of his village or district, will also be good-natured within himself every day of this life and the next life also.

Moral behaviour is therefore a quality which is always necessary in the world.

2. Samadhi 1



ALL types of kammatthana-dhammas are for controlling the "outgoing exuberance" of the heart. The heart which is not controlled by a kammatthana is liable to the arising of "outgoing exuberance" throughout life. This is so from infancy to old age, it is so with the rich and the poor, with the clever and the stupid, with those in high and low position in life, with the blind, deaf, paralysed, maimed, deformed, and so on endlessly.

In Buddhism such people are considered to be still at the age of a "heart with outgoing exuberance". Their hearts have no greatness, they find no contentment, they are ill-fated as regards happiness of heart, and when they die they lose in all ways – like a tree which may have many branches, flowers, and fruit, but if its main root is damaged it will die and lose its greatness and everything else. But unlike the body of a human being who has died, the trunk or branches of the tree may still be useful for some other purpose.

The baneful effect of the "outgoing exuberance" of a heart which does not have Dhamma as its guardian, is that it never finds true happiness, and even if happiness does arise due to the "outgoing exuberance" of the heart searching for it and finding it, it will be happiness of the type in which one is (like an actor) playing a part, which increases the "outgoing exuberance", making the heart go increasingly in the wrong direction, and not the type of happiness which is truly satisfying.

SAMADHI – which means calm or stability of heart, is that which opposes the "outgoing exuberance". The heart on the other hand, doesn't want to take the "medicine", and the medicine is the kammatthana.

"Outgoing exuberance" of the heart has been the enemy of all beings for countless ages, and a person who wants to subdue the "outgoing exuberance" of his own heart will need to compel his heart to take the medicine – which is the kammatthana.

Taking the medicine means training one's heart in Dhamma and not allowing it to go its own way, for the heart always likes to have "outgoing exuberance" as a companion. In other words, taking the medicine means that the heart brings Dhamma into itself as its guardian.

The Dhamma which is the guardian of the heart is called the kammatthana.

There are forty types of kammatthana-dhammas which variously accord with the different temperaments of people. They include:

1. The 10 Kasina (Devices for gazing at and concentrating upon.)

2. The 10 Asubha (Contemplation of the states of the decomposition of a dead body.)
3. The 10 Anussati (Various objects of contemplation.)
4. The 4 Brahmavihara (Friendliness, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity.)
5. The 1 Aharapatikkulasanna (Recollecting the loathsomeness of food.)
6. The 1 Catudhatuvavatthana (Defining the four elements.)
7. The 4 Arupa (Developing the four formless jhanas.)

Here we will confine ourselves to the consideration of a few of these methods which are in general use and which are found to give satisfactory results. They include:

1. Contemplation of the thirty-two parts of the body, including: kesa (hair of the head), loma (hair of the body), nakha (nails), danta (teeth), taco (skin), etc... This first group of parts is called the “Five Kammatthanas”.
2. Contemplation of the “Buddha”, the “Dhamma”, and the “Sangha”.
3. Anapanasati (Awareness of breathing in and out).

Whichever method is used it should suit one’s character, for characters differ, and to teach that everyone should use only one kind of kammatthana may well prove to be a hindrance to some people, thus preventing their attaining the results which they should attain.

When one finds the type of meditation that suits one’s character, one should set one’s mind to begin doing the practice with a preparatory repetition (parikamma), such as, “kesa” (hair of the head). One should then repeat it mentally and not out loud, and at the same time one should keep one’s attention fixed upon hair of the head. If however, one finds that thinking, on its own, is not able to capture the heart, one may repeat the preparatory repetition in the manner of a chant so that the sound captivates the heart and it becomes calm and quiet. One should continue repeating the preparatory repetition until the heart has become calm and then one can stop. But whichever preparatory repetition is used, one should retain conscious awareness of that kammatthana. Thus in the foregoing example of “kesa”, one should retain conscious awareness of the hair on one’s head.

If one uses one of the preparatory repetitions – “Buddho”, “Dhammo”, or “Sangho”, one should set up knowledge of it just in the heart alone. These are not like other types of kammatthanas, for here one should repeat “Buddho” (or “Dhammo”, or “Sangho”) so that it is in continuous contact with the heart and remains there until the one who repeats the “Buddho” of the preparatory repetition and the “one who knows”, who is the heart, are found to be identical.

If it suits one’s character better to use the preparatory repetition “Dhammo” or “Sangho”, one should repeat it so that it is in contact with the heart and remains there until it is found to be identical with the heart. This is done in the same way as the kammatthana “Buddho”.

Anapanasati Bhavana (developing the of awareness of breathing) uses the breath as the objective support of the heart and consists in knowing and mindfulness (sati) of in and out breathing.

In becoming aware of breathing, one should at first fix attention on the feeling of the breath at the nose or the palate (roof of the mouth)², as it suits one, because this is where the breath initially makes contact, and one may use this as a marker point for holding one’s attention. Having done this until one has become skilled, and the in and out breathing becomes finer and finer, one will progressively come to know and understand the nature of the contact of in and out breathing, until it seems that the breathing is located either in the middle of the chest or the solar plexus.³

After this one must just fix one’s attention on breathing at that place and one must no longer be concerned about fixing attention on the breathing at the tip of the nose or the palate, nor about following it in and out with awareness.

In fixing attention on the breath one may also repeat “Buddho” in time with the breath as a preparatory repetition to supervise the in and out breathing, in order to assist the “one who knows” and to make the “one who knows” clear with regard to the breath. Then the breath will appear more and more clearly to the heart. After having become skilled with the breath, every time one attends to the breathing process, one should fix attention at the point in the middle of the chest or the solar plexus.

In particular, it is important to have mindfulness established. One must establish mindfulness to control the heart so that one feels the breath at every moment while it is entering or leaving, whether short or long, until one knows clearly that the breathing is becoming progressively finer with every breath – and until finally it becomes apparent that the finest and most subtle breath and the heart have converged and become one.⁴ At this stage one should fix attention on the breath exclusively within the heart, and there is no need to worry about the preparatory repetition, for in becoming aware of the breath as entering and leaving, and as short or long, the preparatory repetition is only for the purpose of making the citta become more subtle.

When one has attained the most subtle level of breathing, the citta will be bright, cool, calm, happy, and just knowing the heart – and there will be no connection with any disturbing influence. Even if finally at that time, the breath gives up its relationship with oneself, there will be no anxiety because the citta will have let go of the burden and will just have knowledge of the heart alone. In other words, it will be non-dual (ekaggatarammana).

This is the result that comes from developing the practice of Ana-panasati Kammatthana. But it should also be understood that whichever kammatthana is practised, and whoever practises it, this is the kind of result that should be attained.

Concerning the preparatory development (parikamma bhavana); by using one of these forms of kammatthanas for controlling the heart with mindfulness, one will gradually be able to curb the “outgoing exuberance” of the heart. Calm and happiness will then arise and develop, and there will be only one thing influencing the heart, which will be a knowing of the heart alone without any disturbance or distraction, for there will be nothing which can irritate or disturb the heart to make it fall away from this state. This is the nature of happiness of heart, just the heart being free from all

vain imaginings and thought creations.

When this state is attained, the person who is doing the practice will know that which is wondrous in his heart, the like of which he has never encountered before. This is a deeply felt state of happiness, more so than anything which he has previously experienced.

It is also possible that while practising a given type of kammattana, the characteristics of that form of kammattana may appear to some people. For example, hair of the head, or hair of the body, or nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews; or bones, etc., any of which may appear and be seen clearly with the heart, as though one were looking at it with one's eyes. If this happens, one should pay attention to it and see it clearly until it becomes fixed in one's heart, and the longer one can pay attention to it, retain it in this way and fix it in one's heart, the better.

When the above object has been intimately fixed in one's heart, one must appreciate it in the right way by attending to the unpleasant and loathsome aspects of it, for this is the nature of all the parts of the body, both internally and externally. Then divide the body into parts, or into groups of parts depending on their nature. One may take such groups as hair of the head, hair of the body, flesh, bones, and so on; and one may contemplate them as rotting and decayed, as being burnt, as being eaten by vultures, crows and dogs, and see them breaking down into their basic elements – earth, water, fire, air.

Whether one has much or little skill, doing the practice in this way will be of great value when it is done for the purpose of making the heart skilled in seeing the body, for the purpose of seeing truly what is in the body, and for the purpose of reducing and eliminating delusion in regard to the nature of the body, this delusion being what gives rise to sexual craving (raga tanha) – which is one aspect of the “outgoing exuberance” of the heart. One's heart will then become progressively more calm and subtle.

It is important when parts of the body appear, that one should not ignore them and pass them by without interest, nor must one be afraid of them, but one should fix them right in front of one then and there.

When a person who practises meditation has seen this body until it has truly become fixed in his heart, he will feel wearied of himself and will feel the sorrow and misery of himself so that he is horrified and shocked. In addition, the heart of a person to whom the body appears, and who faces up to it while practising meditation will be able to attain samadhi very quickly, and the practice of seeing the body will make his wisdom clear at the same time as his heart becomes calm.⁵

A person who does not see the parts of the body should understand that all preparatory meditation (parikamma bhavana) is for the purpose of leading the citta to a state of both calm and happiness, so one should not feel doubtful about any of these methods that they will not lead the citta to a state of calm, and later on to see danger⁶ with wisdom. One must be determined in whichever meditation one is practising, and repeat whichever preparatory repetition suits one, without becoming disheartened nor feeling like giving up.

It should be realised that whichever method of meditation is practised, it leads to the same goal as all the other methods, and it should also be realised that all these methods of Dhamma will lead the heart to peace and happiness – in other words, to NIBBANA – which is the final goal of all types of meditation development. Therefore one must do one's own meditation practice and not be concerned about other types of meditation, otherwise one will be in a state of doubt and uncertainty, and unable to decide which of them is the right way, which would be a constant obstacle to one's citta, thus preventing one from carrying out one's original resolve.

Instead, one must determine that one will be really mindful in the practice, and one must not arrange sila, samadhi, and pacca in any special order, nor let them go away from the heart, because the defilements (kilesas) of passion, hate, delusion, and the rest, dwell in the heart and nobody has arranged them in order.⁷ When one thinks in wrong and faulty ways, it arouses the defilements in one's heart. One does not decide nor arrange that this one will come earlier, and that one later, for if it is a defilement immediately one thinks wrongly, and whatever type it is, so it arises, and they all make one troubled or passionate in the same way. The defilements are always bound to be of this nature, and it is of no consequence in which order they arise for all of them are able to make one troubled and passionate.

Therefore in curing the defilements, one must not wait to develop sila first, then samadhi second, and panna third – which may be called: “developing samadhi stage by stage” – for this is always in the past and future and one would never be able to attain calm and happiness.

3. Samadhi 2

The true purpose of meditation practice is to bring about calm in the heart. If one cannot attain calm by lulling the heart with a preparatory method (parikamma), one must use the way of subduing it by intimidation. In other words, by using wisdom to search out and examine those things to which the citta is attached, and depending on how skilful one's wisdom is, to search for a way to goad the disobedient citta with what wisdom reveals until it surrenders to wisdom and the heart accepts the truth about the things to which it is attached. Then the heart cannot be distracted and restless and must drop into a state of calm; in the same way as a work animal whose "outgoing exuberance" must be trained by constant goading so that it surrenders to the will of its master.

The following analogy may help to illustrate this method. In a place where there are few trees and each one standing on its own, if a man wanted to cut one down he could do so and make it fall where he wanted. He could then take it and use it as he wished with no difficulty.

But if he wanted to cut a tree down in a forest where its branches were entangled with other trees and creepers, he may find it difficult to fell the tree and to make it fall just where he wanted. So the woodcutter must use his wisdom and examine carefully to find out what is entangled with the tree, and then by cutting away all the entanglements he could fell it just where he wanted and use it however he wished without difficulty.

All of us have characters which are comparable with these two trees, for some types of people do not have much in their environment to burden them and act as a drag on their minds. When they use only a preparatory meditation such as "Buddho", "Dhammo" or "Sangho", the citta is able to become calm and peaceful and drop into a state of samadhi. This becomes the basis for the development of wisdom (panna) and enables them to go ahead with ease – which is called "SAMADHI DEVELOPS WISDOM".

But there are other people who have many things in their environment to burden and oppress their hearts and their natures are such that they like thinking a lot. If they train themselves by using a preparatory meditation as described in the foregoing chapter, they are not able to cause the citta to drop into the calm of samadhi. They must therefore carefully use wisdom to examine the reasons for this, in order to sever the root cause of their distraction by means of wisdom. When wisdom has been nagging at those things to which the citta is firmly attached, what the citta knows about them cannot be superior to that which wisdom reveals, so the citta will then drop into a state of calm and attain samadhi. People of this type must therefore train the citta to attain samadhi by using wisdom, which may be called "WISDOM DEVELOPS SAMADHI" – and is also the title given to this book.

When samadhi steadily develops due to the use of wisdom, the sa-madhi then becomes the basis for further wisdom at a higher level. This latter stage then conforms with the basic principle that: "SAMADHI DEVELOPS WISDOM".

A person who wants to train his heart to become skilful, and to know what is behind the deluded tricks of the defilements (kilesas), must not be attached to study and learning in Buddhism to such an extent that it gives rise to the defilements. But also he must not abandon study and learning, for to do this goes beyond the teaching of the Lord. Both these ways are contrary to the purpose which the Lord Buddha desired that one should aim at.

In other words, when one is practising meditation for the purpose of developing samadhi, do not let the citta grasp at what it has learnt by study, for it will be led into thoughts of the past and future. One must instead make the citta keep to the present, which means that just that aspect of Dhamma which one is developing must be one's only concern.

When there is some question or point of doubt in connection with one's citta which one is unable to resolve, one may then check it by study and learning after one has finished one's meditation practice. But it is wrong to check one's practice all the time with what one has learnt by study, for this will be mere intellectual knowledge, and not knowledge which comes from development in meditation, and it is not the right way.

Summarising the above: if the citta attains calm with an object of calm (samatha), that is, with a preparatory repetition that comes from an aspect of Dhamma that one is developing, one should continue with that method. But if it attains calm only by the use of wisdom, using various expedient methods to overcome difficulties, then one should always use wisdom to help in the attainment of calm.

The results which come from training in both these ways (i.e. samadhi develops wisdom, and wisdom develops samadhi), are the development of CALM and WISDOM, which will have a hidden radiance coming from the calm.

4. Samadhi 3

Samadhi is by name and nature "calmness". It is of three kinds as follows:

1. Khanika Samadhi – in which the heart becomes unwaveringly fixed and calm for a short time after which it withdraws.

2. Upacara Samadhi – of which the Lord Buddha said, that it is almost the same, but it lasts longer than khanika samadhi. Then the citta withdraws from this state.

3. Appana Samadhi – is samadhi that is subtle, firm, and unwavering, and in which one can remain concentrated for a long time. One may also remain concentrated in this state, or withdraw from it as one wishes.

Here, Upacara Samadhi will be briefly discussed from the viewpoint of the “FOREST DHAMMA”.⁸

In Upacara Samadhi, when the citta has dropped into a calm state it does not remain in that state, but partially withdraws from it to follow and get to know about various things which have come into contact with the heart.

Sometimes something arises concerning oneself and one sees a vision (nimitta) which is sometimes good and sometimes bad, but in the first stage the nimitta will generally be something about oneself. If one is not careful this can lead to trouble, because nimittas which arise from this kind of samadhi are of innumerable varieties.

Sometimes in front of one there appears an image of oneself lying down dead, the body decayed and swollen, or it may be the dead body of someone else. Sometimes it is a skeleton, or bones scattered about, or maybe one sees it as a corpse being carried past.

When such a nimitta appears, a clever person will take it as his Uggaha Nimitta; in order that it may become the Patibhaga Nimitta⁹, because this will steadily lead to samadhi becoming firm and to wisdom becoming penetrating and strong.

For a person, who has a strong ability in maintaining a detached rational attitude, to be successful in gaining value from such a nimitta he will always tend to develop mindfulness and wisdom (sati-panna) when faced with it. But there are a lot of people whose natures are timid and easily frightened, and Upacara Samadhi may do harm to the citta of a person of this type because this class of samadhi is of many different kinds and many frightening experiences can occur. For example, the image of a man may appear, whose bodily shape, colour and social position¹⁰ are all frightening, and he may appear as though about to slash at one with a sword, or to eat one.

If however, one has little fear and is not timid, one can suffer no harm in such circumstances and one will learn more and more methods of curing one’s citta from these kinds of nimittas, or samadhi. But with a timid person – who usually tends to look for fearful things – the more he sees a frightening nimitta the larger it becomes, and at such a time he may unfortunately be driven mad.

As for external nimittas which come and go, one may or may not know whether a nimitta is external or whether it arises from oneself. But when one has become skilled with internal nimittas which arise from oneself, one will be able to know which are external nimittas. External nimittas are associated with many different happenings of people, animals, pretas, bhutas (ghosts of the dead), the son of a deva, a devata, Indra, or Brahma, any of which may at that time be associated with one’s samadhi, even as one talks to a guest who comes on a visit. When such incidents occur they may last for a long or short time depending on how long the necessary conditions last that are required for such happenings.

Sometimes however, the first set of conditions dies away and another set of conditions arises continuing from the first set, which is not easily brought to a close for the theme may be of short or long duration. When it dies away and the citta withdraws, it may have spent several hours in this state.

For however long the citta remains concentrated in this kind of samadhi, when it withdraws one will find that it has not increased one’s strength of samadhi, nor made it more firm and durable, nor will it have helped to develop and strengthen one’s wisdom. It is like going to sleep and dreaming, when one wakes one’s mind and body will not have gained their full strength.

But when one withdraws from the type of samadhi in which one became concentrated and remained in this one state, one will find that the strength of one’s samadhi has increased and it has become more firm and durable. Like someone who sleeps soundly without dreaming, when he wakes his body and mind will feel strong.

In Upacara Samadhi, if one is still not skilled and does not use wisdom to be careful and watchful on all sides, it may cause much trouble – and can drive one mad. Those people who practise meditation generally call this state “BROKEN DHAMMA”, and it comes about because of this type of samadhi. But if it is done with due care it can be of value in connection with some things.

As for the Uggaha Nimitta which arises from the citta, as was explained at the beginning of this chapter, this nimitta is the most suitable basis for the development of the Patibhaga Nimitta, which accords with the principles of meditation of those who want a method which is both skilful and truly wise, because this is the nimitta that is associated with the Ariya Sacca (Noble Truths). One must absorb the impression of the Patibhaga Nimitta into one’s heart, then it may be considered to be the Ariya Sacca.¹¹

Both Nimittas which arise from oneself and those which come from external sources may lead to trouble if one is a timid person, and it is important to have wisdom and courage when things happen. But one who has wisdom is not one-sidedly biased against Upacara Samadhi. It is like a poisonous snake, which although dangerous, is sometimes kept by people who can benefit from it. The methods of practising with both kinds of nimittas arising from this type of samadhi (Upacara Samadhi) are thus as follows:

A. The nimitta which arises from the citta is called the “internal nimitta”, and one must go on and turn it into the Patibhaga Nimitta as has already been explained above.

B. The nimitta which arises and is due to external entities such as a person or animal. If one is still not skilled at samadhi, one must stop and one must not, for the time being take any further interest in the matter. But when one has become skilled at samadhi, one may let the citta go out and follow the nimitta and find out what is taking place. It will then be of great value to link together the events of the past and future.

Samadhi of this kind is very strange, and one must not go to extremes and hastily become either enraptured by it, or sorry, but one must make the heart bold and fearless when the various kinds of nimittas arise from Upacara Samadhi, and at the outset see them in terms of the ti-lakkhana (anicca, dukkha and anatta) as soon as any appear.¹² Then they will

not cause any trouble.

It should however be understood that the kind of samadhi in which these nimittas appear does not occur in every case, and where it does not occur, for however long the citta remains in a concentrated state, hardly any nimittas appear. These are the type of people of whom one may say that, “WISDOM DEVELOPS SAMADHI”. With these types of people, even when the citta has dropped down into a calm and concentrated state, nimittas do not arise however long they remain in this state, because wisdom is associated with and gets involved with the samadhi.¹³

But where “SAMADHI DEVELOPS WISDOM”, it is probable that a nimitta will appear in nearly every case, because this kind of citta drops into a concentrated state very quickly; like a person who falls into a well or pit, he does so because he is not careful and falls suddenly. Thus the citta drops down all at once and reaches its resting place, then it retreats from there and comes to know various things, and at that moment a nimitta appears. This is the way it occurs in nearly all such people whose citta is of this type.

But whatever type of samadhi is developed, wisdom is always the thing that is important. When one has withdrawn from samadhi, one must contemplate the elements (dhatu) and the khandhas with wisdom, because wisdom and samadhi are a “Dhamma pair” which go together and cannot be separated. So if samadhi does not progress sufficiently, one must use wisdom to assist it. This is the end of the section dealing with Upacara Samadhi.

It should be understood that samadhi of all types is what aids and supports the development of wisdom, and the extent to which it does this depends on the strength of one’s samadhi. In other words, samadhi which is gross, middling, or subtle, aids and supports wisdom which is gross, middling, or subtle respectively, and it is up to a wise person to turn his samadhi to use by developing wisdom. But generally speaking, whatever type of samadhi is attained, one who practises meditation is likely to become attached to it, because when the citta drops into a concentrated state and while it rests there, a state of calm and happiness is present. It can be said that in being attached to samadhi, or calm, the citta has no problems while it remains concentrated, and can remain at rest for as long as one wishes, depending on the level of one’s samadhi.

An important thing is that, when the citta has withdrawn, it still longs for its state of repose although one has enough calm to meditate using wisdom – and one’s calm is sufficient so that one should be able to use wisdom very effectively. But one still tries to stay in a state of calm, without being at all interested in the development of wisdom. This is becoming addicted to samadhi and being unable to withdraw from it in order to go further.

5. Wisdom

The right and smooth way for one who practises meditation, once the citta has become sufficiently calm to see the way, is to begin by training it to investigate the parts of the body with wisdom, either singly or as many parts, opening up and looking into one’s own body. One may start from hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, spleen, heart, liver, pleura, kidneys, lungs, small intestine, large intestine, fresh food, old food (digested food)...etc., these altogether, being called the thirty two parts of the body. These parts are by normal standards always loathsome and detestable, and there is not one of them which is beautiful and charming – as they are usually thought to be by people in the world.

In life these parts are loathsome and unpleasant, and in death even more so, quite irrespective of whether they are the bodily parts of an animal or human beings, man or woman, for this is the nature of all of them.

The world is full of things such as these loathsome parts and it is hard to find anything more strange. But whoever lives in this world must have such things, must be such things and must see such things.

ANICCA – Impermanence – is the nature of this body.

DUKKHA – Hardship and Pain – is the nature of this body.

ANATTA – The negation of the desires of all beings – is the nature of this body.

Things which do not fulfil any of one’s hopes are about and within this body. Delusion with regard to beings and sankharas, is delusion with regard to this body. Attachment to beings and sankharas is attachment to this body. Separation from beings and sankharas is separation from this body. The infatuations of love and hate are infatuation with this body. Not wanting death is anxiety about this body – and when dead, the weeping and mourning of relations and friends is because of this body.

The distress and suffering from the day of one’s birth to the time of one’s death is because of this body. All day and night, animals and people run this way and that in swarms, searching for places to live and food, because of the nature of this body.

The great cause and the great story in this world, which is the wheel that whirls people and animals around without ever letting them open their eyes properly to the nature of their state, and is like a fire burning them all the time, is the story of this body which is the cause of it all. Beings are inundated by the defilements (kilesas) until they are quite unable to extricate themselves from this situation, because of this body. In brief, the whole story of this world is the story of what concerns this body alone.

When one examines the body and what is related to it with wisdom, in the foregoing way without stopping, so that it becomes clear and evident to the heart, from where can the defilements raise their army to prevent the heart dropping into a state of calm? Wisdom is proclaiming the truth and making the heart listen, and when it is doing this all the time,

where can the heart go to oppose the truth that comes from wisdom? From the heart come the defilements, and from the heart comes wisdom, so how could it be that the heart, which is “oneself”, should not be able to cure one’s own defilements by means of wisdom? And when wisdom dwells upon the body in this way, why should one not see clearly within the body?

When the heart views the body in the foregoing way, with wisdom, it will become wearied both of one’s own body and the bodies of other people and animals. This will reduce one’s pleasurable excitement in regard to the body, and will thus withdraw “upadana” – fixed attachment – to the body, by means of “samueddha-pahana” (cutting off attachment by abandoning it). At the same time one will know the body and all its parts as they truly are, and one will no longer be deluded by love or hate for the body of anyone or anything.

The citta in using the spyglass of wisdom to go sightseeing in the “City of the Body” can see one’s own “Body City” and then that of other people and animals quite clearly, until one comes to see in greater detail that all the roads, streets and alleyways are divided into three aspects, which are the ti-lakkhana – anicca, dukkha, and anatta – and into four aspects, which are the four elements (dhatu) – earth, water, fire, air – and this is so throughout every part of the whole body. Even the lavatory and the kitchen are to be found within this “Body City”.

One who is able to see the body clearly in this way may be classed as a “Lokavidu” – one who can see clearly within the “City of the Body” throughout all the three world spheres (ti-loka-dhatu) by means of “Yatha-Bhuta-Nanadassana” – which means seeing in a true way everything within the body and coming to the end of all doubts with regard to the body – and this is called “Rupa Dhamma”.

We now go on to a discussion of vipassana in connection with “Nama Dhammas”. Nama dhammas include vedana, sanna, sankhara, and vinnana, these four being the second group of the five khandhas, but they are more subtle than the rupa khandha which is the body. One cannot look into them with one’s eyes, but one can come to know them by way of the heart.

Vedana – means those things (feelings) which are experienced by the heart that are sometimes pleasant, sometimes painful, and sometimes neutral.

Sanna – means remembering (recollecting) – for example, remembering names, sounds, objects and things, or verses in the Pali language, etc.

Sankhara – means thinking or thought constructing (imagination) – such as thoughts which are good or evil, or thoughts which are neither good nor evil; or for example, thought constructing which is based on the past and imagining the future.

Vinnana – means awareness (sense awareness) – of forms, sounds, smells, tastes, or things which touch us, and of mental objects, just at that moment when these things come into contact with the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or heart respectively.

These four nama dhammas are the activities of the heart, they come from the heart, they may be known in the heart, and if the heart is not careful they are also the deceivers (maya) of the heart, and so they are also the things which can hide or obscure the truth.

Investigation of these four nama dhammas must be done with wisdom, and entirely in terms of the ti-lakkhana, because into whatever mode they change, these khandhas always have the ti-lakkhana present within them. But when investigating these four khandhas one may do so in any one of them and in any one of the ti-lakkhana as one’s heart truly prefers, or one may do so generally in all of them together if it prefers it that way, because each of the khandhas and the ti-lakkhana are aspects of the Dhamma which are linked and related together.

Thus if one investigates only one of the khandhas or ti-lakkhana, it will lead one to understand, and to see deeply and fully into all the other khandhas and ti-lakkhana, the same as if one investigated them all together at the same time, because all of them have the Ariya Sacca (The Noble Truths) as their boundary, their territory, and as that which accommodates them.¹⁴ This is like eating food, all of which goes down into one place (the stomach) and then permeates to all parts of the body, which is the total territory that accommodates it.

Therefore one who practises must set up mindfulness and wisdom so as to get close and intimate with the nama dhamma – which are these four khandhas. All the time these khandhas are changing, for they appear, remain for a time then die away and cease, and being impermanent they are also dukkha and anatta. This is how they display and proclaim their true nature, but they never have time to stop and look at it. They never have time to become calm, not even one moment. Internally, externally, everywhere throughout every realm (loka-dhatu), they proclaim with one voice that they are impermanent, and are thus dukkha and anatta, and that they reject the longings of beings and this means that none of these things have an owner. They proclaim that they are always independent and free, and that whoever deludedly becomes attached to them only meets with suffering, depression and sorrow which fill his thoughts and heart until in the end his tears of misery are like an ever-flooded river – and it will continue to be thus throughout time while beings remain deluded and entangled. Yet it is easy to point out that the five khandhas are the well of tears of those who are steeped in delusion.

Investigating all the khandhas and sabhava dhammas (things in nature) with right wisdom so as to know them clearly is for the purpose of minimising one’s tears and for diminishing the process of becoming and birth, or for cutting them away from the heart, which is the owner of dukkha, so that one may receive perfect happiness.

Sabhava dhammas such as the khandhas are poisonous to one who is still sunk in delusion, but one who truly knows all the khandhas and sabhava dhammas as they are, cannot be harmed by them and may still obtain value from them in appropriate ways. It is like a place where thorny bushes grow, they are dangerous to anyone who does not know where they are and who gets entangled in them. But someone who knows all about them can use them to make a fence or a

boundary for a building site, thus obtaining value from them in appropriate ways. Therefore, one who practises must act skilfully in relation to the khandhas and sabhava dhammas.

All these things (khandhas and sabhava dhammas) arise and die away based on the citta the whole time, and one must follow and know what is happening to them with an all-embracing wisdom that will immediately know what they are up to. One must take this up as an important task to be done in all four postures, without being careless or forgetful.

The teaching of Dhamma (Dhamma-desana) which comes from the khandhas and sabhava dhammas everywhere at this stage, will appear by way of unceasing mindfulness and wisdom, and this teaching will not be lacking in eloquence of expression. All the time it will proclaim the facts of the ti-lakkhana within one by day and night, and while standing, walking, sitting or lying down, and this is also the time when one's wisdom should be ripe for listening, as though one were meditating on the Dhamma-desanas of the wisest monks.

At this level, the person who is doing the practice will be completely absorbed in his research into the true nature of the khandhas and sabhava dhammas which are proclaiming the truth of themselves, and he will hardly be able to lie down and sleep because of the strength of the energy in the basis of his nature, which searches by means of wisdom into the khandhas and sabhava dhammas without resting or stopping – these (khandhas and sabhava dhammas) being the same as the basis of his nature.

Then from the khandhas and sabhava dhammas he will obtain the truth, and it will be made clear to his heart by wisdom that all the khandhas and sabhava dhammas everywhere throughout the three world spheres (ti-loka-dhatu) are of such a nature and normality that none of them seem to be defilements and craving (kilesas and tanha) in any way whatsoever, which is in contrast to the deluded understanding of most people.

The following simile may help to explain this. Supposing some things are stolen by a thief, those things become tainted by association with the thief. But once the authorities have carefully investigated the case until they have sufficient witnesses and evidence, and are satisfied, the stolen goods which have been recovered can be returned to their original owner, or kept in a safe place so that no blame shall be attached to them. The authorities are then no longer concerned with the stolen goods, but only with the punishment of the thief. They must then obtain evidence against the thief and arrest him and bring him to trial in accordance with the law.

When the truth of his guilt is established by reliable witnesses and evidence, the blame is put on the accused in accordance with the law, and any others who were not to blame would be allowed to go free, as they were before the incident.

The behaviour of the citta with ignorance (avijja), and all the sabhava dhammas, are similar to this, for the khandhas and sabhava dhammas throughout all the three world spheres (ti-loka-dhatu) are not at fault and are entirely free from any defilements or evil ways, but they are associated with them because the citta, which is entirely under the power of avijja, does not itself know the answer to the question: "Who is avijja?"

Avijja and the citta are blended together as one, and it is the citta which is completely deluded that goes about forming loves and hates which it buries in the elements (dhatu) and khandhas – that is, in forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and bodily feeling, and in the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and heart. It also buries love and hate in rupa, vedana, sanna, sankhara, and vinnana, throughout the whole universe (ti-loka-dhatu). It is the things of nature which are seized, and it is love and hate which come from the whole of this deluded heart that grasp and seize them.

Because of the power of seizing and grasping, which are the causes, this "avijja heart" wanders through birth, old age, sickness and death, going round and round in this way through each and every life, regardless of whether it is higher or lower, good or evil, through all the three realms of becoming (bhava).

The different kinds of birth that beings may take in these realms of becoming are countless, yet the citta with avijja is able to grasp at birth in any of these realms in accordance with the supporting conditions of this citta and depending on how weak or strong and good or evil they may be. This heart must then go and be born in those circumstances that present a complete environment to which the heart (with these supporting conditions) is related.

Thus the citta gradually changes into ways which are false to its true nature, due only to the power of avijja, and it begins to stain and colour everything in the universe in a false manner, thus altering the natural state. In other words, the original basic elements change and become animals, people, birth, old age, sickness and death, in accordance with the usual delusion (or avijja) of beings.

When one understands clearly with wisdom, that the five khandhas and the sabhava dhammas are not the main story, nor the ones who started the story, but are only involved in the story because avijja is the one who wields the authority and power, compelling all sabhava dhammas to be of this nature, then wisdom searches for the source of it all, which is the "CITTA THAT KNOWS", which is the "well" out of which all the stories of all things arise endlessly in all situations, and wisdom has no confidence in this knowledge.

When mindfulness and wisdom have been developed by training for a long time until they are fully proficient, they will be able to surround and to penetrate straight through to the "great centre". In other words, "the one who knows" (i.e. the citta that knows), who is full of avijja, does not hesitate to fight against wisdom. But when avijja can no longer stand against the "Diamond Sword", which is unshakeable mindfulness and wisdom, it falls away from the citta which has been its supreme throne for aeons.

As soon as avijja has been destroyed and has dropped away from the citta, due to the superior power of "Magga Nana", which is the right weapon for use at this time, the whole of truth which has been suppressed and covered by avijja for countless ages is then disclosed and revealed as the "goods which have been stolen",¹⁵ or as the entire complete truth. Dhamma which was never before known, then finally appears as "Yatha-Bhuta-Nanadassana" – knowledge and true insight into all sabhava dhammas – which are revealed without the least thing remaining hidden or obscured.

When avijja, the Lord who rules the round of death, has been destroyed by the weapon of "Panna Nana", Nibbana will be revealed to the one who thus acts truly, knows truly, and sees truly – it cannot be otherwise.

All the sabhava dhammas, from the five khandhas to the internal and external ayatanas and up to the whole of the ti-loka-dhatu are the Dhamma which is revealed as it truly is. There is then, nothing that can arise as an enemy to one's

heart in the future – except for the vicissitudes of the five khandhas which must be looked after until they reach their natural end.

So the whole story is that of avijja – which is just “false knowing” – which goes around molesting and obstructing natural conditions so that they are changed from their true natural state. Just by the cessation of avijja, the world (loka), which means the natural state of things everywhere becomes normal and there is nothing left to blame or criticise it. It is as if a famous brigand had been killed by the police, after which the citizens of the town could live happily and need no longer go about watchfully for fear of the brigand.

The heart is then possessed of “Yatha-Bhuta-Nanadassana” which means that it knows, sees and follows the truth of all the sabhava dhammas, and this knowledge is balanced and no longer inclines to one-sided views or opinions.

From the day that avijja is dispersed from the heart, it will be entirely free in its thinking, meditating, knowing and seeing into the sabhava dhammas which are associated with the heart. The eye, ear, nose, etc., and form, sound, smell, etc., then become free in their own natural sphere respectively, without being oppressed and forced, nor promoted and encouraged by the heart as usually happens. Because the heart is now in a state of Dhamma and impartiality, for it is impartial towards everything so that it will no longer have any enemies or foes. This means that the citta and all sabhava dhammas in the universe (ti-loka-dhatu) are mutually in a state of complete peace and calm by virtue of the perfect Truth. The work of the citta and of insight (vipassana) into the nama dhammas which are associated with the citta ends at this point.

I want to beg the pardon of all of you who practise for the purpose of getting rid of the defilements using the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha, who find this exposition different from those that you have been used to. But one should see that the Dhamma in all the old Buddhist texts also points directly at the defilements and the Dhamma which are within oneself, for one must not think that the defilements and Dhamma are hidden elsewhere, external, apart from oneself.

One who has “Opanayika Dhamma” (Dhamma which leads inward) firmly in his heart will be able to free himself, because the “Sasana Dhamma” (Buddhist Dhamma) teaches those who listen to it to make it “Opanayika” – in other words, to bring the Dhamma into oneself. And please do not think that the Dhamma teaching of the Buddha is a thing of the past or future and that it concerns only those who are dead and those who are yet to be born. One should realise that the Lord Buddha did not teach people who were already dead, nor those who were still to be born. He taught people who lived at that time and who were still alive in the same way as all of us are still alive, for it is the nature of Buddhism to exist in the present and to be always a thing of today.

May you all be happy without exception, and may blessings come to all of you who read or hear this.

Thank you

6. Glossary

The following is a list of the Pali words as used in the text, together with a brief translation and comment when necessary. The list follows the Roman alphabet for ease of reference.

Acariya: Teacher. Sometimes also a term of respect for a senior monk. Anicca: Impermanence, transience, instability.

Anapanasati: Mindfulness of breathing in and out. One of the best known forms of meditation practice.

Anatta: That the animistic idea and attitude which people and beings attribute to themselves, others and other things, which give rise to the firmly held attitude that there is a presiding (Self) entity in the five khandhas is in fact a convenient fiction and truly speaking quite false.

Appana: Absorption (in the object).

Ariya: Noble.

Asubha: That which is unpleasant, loathsome, contrary to what is usually desired. Avijja: Ignorance, in the form of blind unknowing.

Ayatana: Sense fields. Thus, the field of seeing, hearing, etc., – mental sensation. Bhava: Realms of existence, birth.

Bhavana: Development by means of meditation.

Bhikkhu: A monk, usually in reference to Buddhism. One who lives on donated food.

Bhuta: What has come into existence. A form of ghost.

Brahma: The great god, but in the sense of the Greek gods. E.g. Zeus.

Brahmavihara: The four states of: metta (friendliness), karuna (compassion), mudita (gladness at the well being of others), upekkha (equanimity).

Buddho: A Parikamma for the recollection of the Buddha.

Citta: That underlying essence of mind where Dhamma and the kilesas dwell. In its pure state it is indefinable and beyond samsara. It controls the khandhas and does not die when the kilesas die.

Desana: The teachings of Dhamma; Dhamma talk.

Deva: An angel like being of the deva-realms which are immediately above the human realm.

Dhamma: Truth, the ultimate order underlying everything, the teaching of the Buddha.

Dhatu: Element. Thus, the four elements of earth, water, fire and air; and the sense organs such as the eye, ear, nose, etc.

Dukkha: Discontent, suffering.

Ekaggatarammana: Non-dual, oneness of the citta.

Indra: One of the chief Indian deities.

Jhana: Various states of meditative absorption, including the four rupa and the four arupa-jhanas.

Kammattana: Lit: "kamma = action, thana = a region or place."

Karuna: Compassion.

Kesa: Hair of the head.

Khandha: A heap, but usually referring to the five khandhas, these being, the body, feeling, memory, thought / imagination, and consciousness.

Kilesa: The defilements based upon greed, hate, and delusion.

Lakkhana: A characteristic mark. Thus, the three lakkhana are impermanence, suffering, and "non-self".

Loka: The world.

Lokavidu: One who sees and knows the worlds.

Magga: Path. Usually referring to the Noble Eight-Fold Path leading to Nibbana.

Maha: Great, superior. In Thailand, a degree in Pali studies.

Maya: Fraud, deceit, illusion.

Metta: Friendliness; pure love.

Nama: Name. The four mental factors of the five khandhas.

Canā: Knowing, instinctive knowing, intuitive knowing. Nibbana: The ultimate goal of Buddhist training. Lit: "Extinguished".

Nimitta: A sign. In meditation practice, a mental image which is usually visual.

Opanayika: Leading to, bringing near to.

Panna: Wisdom.

Parikamma: Preparatory practice. Preparatory meditation.

Patibhaga: The nimitta which arises in the deepest level of samadhi.

Preta: (Pali: Peta); The dead, departed, a ghost.

Raga: Lust, attachment.

Rupa: Form, shape, the body.

Sabhava: Nature, a thing in itself, a condition.

Sacca: Truth.

Samadhi: Absorbed concentration which has many levels and kinds.

Samatha: Calm.

Samuccheda-pahana: Letting go by cutting off attachments.

Sangha: A group of at least four monks, the monastic order.

Sankhara: The group of parts that make up anything. That which puts together the parts that make up anything.

Sanna: Memory.

Sasana: A religion, a system of teaching and training.

Sati: Mindfulness.

Savaka: A hearer (of the teaching). Usually in reference to those who heard the teaching directly from the Buddha.

Sila: Morality, moral behaviour.

Tanha: Craving, including: greed, hate and delusion.

Thera: An elder, a monk who has been in the Sangha for ten or more years.

Ti-bhava: Three states of being: kama, rupa, and arupa.

Ti-lakkhana: The three characteristics, these being: impermanence, suffering, and non-self.

Ti-loka-dhatu: The three worlds, the universe.

Uggaha: Learning. The name of the image (nimitta) that arises in the second stage of samadhi.

Upacara: Approach, access. The name of the second stage of samadhi.

Upadana: Attachment, clinging.

Vedana: Feeling.

Vihara: A dwelling place.

Vinnana: Consciousness.

Vipassana: Insight, of such a type as is deep and effective in “curing” the defilements. It is insight which arises based on samadhi, and not just an intellectual exercise.

Yatha-Bhuta-Nanadassana: Seeing with insight into things as they really are.

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